

In 1974, at the age of seventeen, I entered Kansas University Medical Center for major surgery. It was about the third evening after the surgery that I began having some problems, and I was whisked down the hall, near the nurse's station. Around me the medical team was shouting at me to hang in there, while they searched for non-existent veins. Later I heard that I'd been bleeding internally, as well as experiencing kidney failure. My doctor loudly asked my nurse what my blood pressure was, and I remember her answering "zero" and then "zilch".

At the moment when I heard the nurse say "zilch" I started to notice that something very unusual was happening. Although I could still see vividly, I also could feel myself withdrawing. I grew very aware of my internal functioning, especially my breathing. I noticed that each time I breathed it was deeper and longer between each new breath. I was feeling very, very peaceful now, and lighter, and I even began counting each breath. One, two, three, and then it happened; the third gasp of breath felt extremely deep and upon the exhalation I could not believe it, but I became that breath of air that was leaving my body. It was like my consciousness, me, everything, was that breath! Yet, even though I was the breath, I felt like a whole person. I started moving upward. I felt so free, free! And I felt peaceful, and greatly relieved. Then I realized my body was below me, and vaguely remember observing efforts by the staff to try to revive it.

This lasted only an instant before I became aware of Christ's presence in mid air before me. He had dark brown/black hair, was wearing a white robe and had the most amazing eyes! Light came through Him, and out everywhere, all around Him. His eyes were bluish, almost transparent, piercing, but loving. They were everything. I don't know how to explain it. All I know is that I've never seen any eyes like that before. He really looked in you, it was not just at you. And when he looked in you, you knew immediately that He knew all there was to know about you. You didn't even have to think it. Along with His light He constantly radiated a love that overwhelmed me. It was not the way we know love, but pure, unadulterated Love. Interestingly, my reaction, as soon as Christ met me was that I'd known Him all along, and that I'd never left. Simultaneously, I had a realization that I had known everything there ever was to know all along. But it was like somehow I'd forgotten. That forgetfulness disappeared in His presence. I just knew everything.

Then Christ, emanating Light and Love, took me up toward the sky. This first heaven, as I think of it, was light blue in color, but so brilliant and unlike anything I've seen that I can't fully describe it. It opened up, split down the middle, as though along a seam, and both sides rolled back like paper scrolls. This happened as fast as a snap of my fingers. There were two more sky-like heavens we went through, identical with the first, that also rolled back one after the other. I now found myself in a third heavenly realm in a matter of seconds.

When we arrived there, Christ had stepped back and all I could see was light. But it was unlike light I've ever seen or felt. This light was filled with energy, a lot of energy! And it was alive! It was alive, awesome and very powerful. I thought "It must be this which moves through life." Stunned with the immensity of all this, I felt so totally insignificant, so overwhelmed, that I fell down prostrate and trembled.

Now all I was aware of being there were Christ and God. But I hadn't actually "seen" God. I had sensed that He was this Energy. Yet, at the same time, I also sensed His more concentrated presence on an invisible type of throne that was so big that it extended all the way to the earth. I believe He spoke to me, and it was unlike the mental speech between Christ and myself because He sounded like many waters, sort of rushing. That's the closest I can come to describing it. Many, many waters, moving. But it made sense to me. I lay there for what seemed eternity as I heard God speaking to my soul. I don't remember what was said; but it was something about me and my life.

God's voice stopped and I was still bowed. Then out from me came my life like a movie of my childhood all the way up to the current time and place where I was, but a movie that I could both see and at the same time be in. I relived every instant of my existence, every thought I'd ever had, every emotion. I saw why I was the way I was. I reexperienced how I had dealt with people and how people had interacted with me. I saw things I could have done a little better or different, felt emotions I was ashamed of, but also saw things I had done just fine, that I felt good about. These observations came to me automatically, as from myself. It was, in a sense, me judging me.

With the ending of the life review, I felt absolutely unworthy. I felt unworthy of being there in the presence of this magnificent Light. I felt unworthy in comparison to the grand scheme of things. It is all so beautiful. And what am I? I said all this to God. A hand touched my shoulder and strength filled me from Christ so that I immediately stood up. Taking me by the hand He led me aside from what seemed like a main arena. Then He looked into my eyes and I knew He knew everything I felt and that He understood. He looked into me with such love, more love than I ever thought possible for anyone to know. He smiled, then communicated in one look that everything would be all right.

Back out He walked alone. Where Christ's Light ended and God's began I cannot say. All I know is that they both gave off Light and that their Light was the same Light. Then, turning sideways, Christ extended one arm towards me and one arm towards God, acting as a bridge. There was discussion between them about me, God still sounding like moving waters, while Christ sounded like you or I. Even though I could understand God, it was easier for me to understand Christ. Every now and then I caught something Christ was saying, but I definitely remember His ending with "My blood is sufficient. She's mine." When he said that, all my doubts about my worthiness as a being disappeared and I rejoiced. He came back to me and looked at me again with nothing but comforting love. We rejoiced together. Then He told me something else, but I can't remember what it was. At that moment I felt so free and so loved that I never wanted to leave His side and I told Him I wanted to stay with Him. And then I saw a look in His eyes that said I had to return. He told me that I had to go back, because He had work for me to do. Coming back to my body in intensive care was as quick as my journey out had been. It seemed like the speed of light. Christ brought me and I was looking at His face, a face I could have looked at forever, when it disappeared. It was replaced by the face of a friend looking down at me.

My life was profoundly changed. And occasionally I would see things to come, something which still happens to me in the form of what I call "visions." In 1986 my husband Walter and I had felt moved to start a shelter for the homeless on Beacon Ave in Seattle. We kept it running for two and a half years. Not long after this I had a vision in which I saw the world covered with many faces of men and women. Then Christ appeared and unrolled a scroll that said "Feed my sheep". Within the year people began arriving at the shelter with the faces of the people I'd seen on the globe! And when I'd talk with them, they'd often mention a peculiar sensation that they'd done this before! I'd just smile because I knew that they were at the right place at the right time, where they were supposed to be.

Perhaps one of the biggest changes to happen in my life was in my point of view. Before my NDE I used to squabble and bicker with Walter a lot about petty things. And I had wanted a lot of things for myself. When I came back I had a different appreciation for human relationships. They are so important! It's as though a lot of things we think are so important aren't really at all. What matters is just being together, supporting one another and loving one another. This realization helped me to finally cut through a lot of tendencies I had had to want this and to want that. And while I have never had thrust into my hand a statement that defines my purpose for being here, my strongest sense is that it is to love.